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BULLETIN
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TORREY BOTANICAL CLUB.

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An Enumeration of the Plants Collected by Dr. H. H. Rusby in South America. 1885-1886.—I.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE REGION TRAVERSED.

The collections recorded in this series of papers were made during a two years journey along the Pacific coast and across the continent of South America, the special object being the investigation of Medical Botany.

The route of travel covered regions the most diverse as regards all the conditions of plant life. North of Guayaquil the coast is verdant, the luxuriant tropical vegetation reaching the very water's edge. But a short distance south of that city begins an entirely different region. The eastern cordillera of the Andes divides South America into two portions, having almost nothing in common. While only a few miles in width, this cordillera marks differences in soil, climate, and general appearance, as great as any to be observed upon the globe.

Upon the Pacific side there is a very general dearth of moisture, rain being in many places almost unknown, while upon the eastern slope rain is so constant that months may pass when the sun is seen for scarcely an entire hour, and the humidity is so great that clouds of rising vapor sometimes obscure the view of even the nearest objects. The laden clouds that sweep in from the tropical Atlantic lose little of their moisture in crossing the Amazonian basin; any loss is but temporary, the equilibrium being at once restored by the soaking up of a fresh supply from the enormous water surface that the region presents. But immediately on reaching the mountains, great volumes of water are precipitated. The lightened clouds endeavor to escape upward, reach the colder strata, and suffer fresh precipitations. This process is continued over a belt of two hundred and fifty miles of steadily increasing elevation, until the winds which cross the cordillera carry only the merest traces of moisture. Throughout most of this heavily watered region, the vegetation is of the densest character. Allowing for the breaks caused by the streams, it might be said that an arboreal animal, ascending a tree upon the Andean foothills, could pass to the Atlantic without once descending to the ground.

The species and genera of this eastern Andean region have in general a very wide range. With the latitude, varies the altitude at which they grow. As we pass to the cooler southern region, a species or its representative creeps down upon the mountain sides. Thus, the *Desfontainea spinosa*, Remy., which I collected abundantly in northern Bolivia, gradually descends, until in the neighborhood of the cape, Lieutenant Safford finds it near the sea level, constituting a characteristic feature of the landscape. Sometimes also, a species has its limits as to altitude very narrowly and sharply defined, but will be represented at successively lower elevations by other species exceedingly closely related. Of this, the *Cinchonas* furnish us a striking example. Each altitude has its own species—if species they can be called—and they usually overlap to but a trifling extent. I have (in two cases) looked along a mountain side where miles of *Cinchona Calisaya* had been planted, and seen the upward limit defined to within fifty feet by a line of dead or dying trees.

In general, we are disappointed by the scarcity of flowers as compared with the abundance of plants. To this rule, trees and many herbs are exceptions. But in the case of shrubs and vines, of which latter there is everywhere a multitude, it is strikingly true. It is probably to be accounted for by the steepness of the land and a climate highly favorable for the reëstablishment of detached fragments, torn away and carried to a new position. Unable to obtain the light and air necessary for a high floral development, they have learned to depend upon a less complicated method.

Turning to the western side, we find, as stated, a region in which almost every condition is reversed. With more or less scanty rains, strictly limited to a few months or even weeks, we get a treeless and almost shrubless region, with a temperature subject to very sudden and great variations. The amount of moisture increases with the altitude. Upon our school-maps great deserts are located on the table lands of this region. The real deserts, however, are not there, but along the coast. Upon the highlands there is sufficient moisture to redeem the country from barrenness, and it is a fairly good stock country. As upon the eastern side, so upon the western, the highland vegetation creeps down the mountains as we go southward, until at Valparaiso it reaches the ocean. North of Valparaiso there is thus left a true desert along the coast, which widens as we go northward, until at the boundary of Chili and Peru, we find miles of pure, absolutely barren sand. To the patient and industrious botanist this coast desert will furnish a far more interesting field than the luxuriant regions to the eastward. There is no regular water supply, the showers being infrequent and spasmodic, with years sometimes elapsing between them. But when they do occur in sufficient quantity we find a rich and beautiful flora, springing up, maturing and perishing in an incredibly short period of time. What special provisions are required, and what lessons in physiology are to be learned, while watching the processes of birth and extinction which are here going on! Long after the flora of the Amazonian basin shall have been satisfactorily classified, this desert region will be contributing its annual quota of undescribed species.

With this very meagre general outline before us, we shall notice briefly the special localities where the collections were made.

A part of a day each were spent at Guayaquil, Zorritos, Payta and Coquimbo, and two or three days at Lima, but only fragments were collected. Zorritos stands at the northern extremity of the desert, and is watered with moderate frequency. The *Prosopis*, *Cereus*, Amarantaceæ and Chenopodiaceæ, reminded me strongly of the gravelly hills of the Mohave desert. Payta is one of the dryest spots in the world, and Coquimbo is but little better. Lima, like Tacna, stands near the foot of the mountain. At the latter place a week was spent in the early part of February. No rain had occurred, and the fifty species collected were all from irrigated grounds. Tacna has one small stream, conducted through the town by a paved channel, and it does duty in great part as a sewer, besides furnishing the only water supply. From Tacna, the route lay seven days by mule, to La Paz. At nine thousand feet, 17° south latitude,* the vegetation is sufficient to afford pasturage for the llama. At twelve thousand feet we are upon the table-land, which is, in part at least, volcanic, and at first thickly covered with loose rounded stones. Farther on it becomes sandy and rocky by turns. We cross many superimposed small ranges, and skirt the bases of much greater ones. The landscape is much like that of our own south-western plateau, except that there is less grass. What frequently appears like a grassy plain, proves to be covered with plants like dwarf *Hypochœris* or *Perezia*, only an inch or two in height, and presenting a green cushion of needles in the form of spines terminating the erect linear leaves. Numerous species of *Adesmia*, rarely rising above a foot from the ground, and often very closely prostrate, cover much of the country.

Near the eastern verge of this table-land, in a basin two thousand feet deep, with nearly vertical walls of clay or gravel, is situated La Paz, at an elevation of about eleven thousand feet. Here I spent some two weeks during the months of February, March and April, collecting one hundred and fifty or more species. This was during the latter half of the rainy season, when the walls of the basin, and the gravelly and rocky hills along the La Paz River to the south, were richly clothed with plants in flower. The remainder of the time during this period was passed across the range in Yungas. Returning early in April to the coast, I proceeded to Valparaiso, where three months were spent. Here the season is earlier, and winter was just setting in when I arrived. A winter there is about the same as in northern Florida, the orange surviving, but not thriving. Some twenty-five or thirty stray specimens were found in flower before I returned to La Paz. It being then early in June, I found a dry and wintry season prevailing, with a most dreary prospect for a collector. For a long time business detained me in the city, save for a few short excursions across the mountains, and one long stay in the province of Yungas, made, unfortunately, at an unfavorable season for collecting. Just as the rains were beginning the next January, I was obliged to leave La Paz on my journey to the Atlantic. Thus, out of almost a year spent in this interesting region, fortune had favored me with only about two weeks favorable collecting. But extensive collections had been made meantime upon the eastern slope at Unduavi and Yungas. Unduavi is one of several little hamlets upon a mountain stream in the first valley to the eastward of La Paz. But I have characterized by this name the entire collecting station constituted by this valley and its enclosing mountains. At 12,000 feet begins the semi-alpine flora generally associated with *Aspidium aculeatum* and the smaller species of *Acrostichum*. At 10,000 feet the shining, coriaceous leaves of the tropics begin to be seen, and at 8,000 feet the vegetation is truly tropical, including bamboos, fuchsias and begonias. The whole surface is characteristically rocky, the soil being very scanty indeed. but rich. At Unduavi, between 8,000 and 10,000 feet, I collected 150 species in flower in October, in three days.

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*Distances, latitudes and altitudes are given approximately.

Crossing the northern wall of this valley, we find upon the summit, at about 11,000 or 12,000 feet, a cold, boggy and cloudy region, where sphagnums and long drooping lichens abound. Upon the other side we are in Yungas, referring not to the political boundary, but to my collecting station of that name. Descending to 7,000 feet, we enter the great Andean forests which become heavier and heavier, though scarcely denser, as we descend. The trunks and greater branches are scarcely to be seen for the epiphytes upon them, chief of which are orchids, bromeliads, ferns, mosses and aroids. At 5,500 feet we strike the coca and cinchona belt, and at 4,000 feet we find the heat becoming oppressive and the air sultry. From 3,500 to 5,500 feet is probably the region of greatest rain-fall. The Yungas collections were chiefly made at elevations of 3,000, 4,000 and 6,000 feet.

Leaving La Paz on the 10th of January, 1886, we were at once overtaken by the unprecedented rains of that season. At Sorata, on the base of Mount Iliampu, we were detained by floods from the latter part of January till about the first of March. But little could be dried, and that little with the greatest difficulty, many of the collections being repeated once and some of them twice. In transit to the coast moreover, the continuous rains succeeded in penetrating some of the bales. A fine and little known alpine flora exists on Mt. Iliampu. The altitude and conditions of this locality are a parallel of those of Unduavi. One day's journey to the northward we reach Ingenio del Oro, a gold washing establishment. This locality is also very similar to Unduavi, but has the richest flora (March) of any locality that I have ever visited. It is above timber line. Three days of miserable exposure were passed here, and all our collections spoiled. Two days more brought us to Mapiri, a section almost precisely like Yungas, where, at 2,500 to 5,000 feet, I remained during March and April, improving the fairly good weather in making enormous collections, which arrived home, after great vicissitudes, in very fair condition. Mapiri is the great centre of *Cinchona* culture in South America, and large collections of these plants were made, among them being many new hybrids. The run of eighty-four miles to Guanai, 2,000 feet elevation, was made on rafts by the force of the current in a little less than eight hours. Arriving at Guanai three weeks earlier, we should have encountered one of the most interesting floras in South America. However, as we lost nearly everything collected at this place, it mattered but little. The forests at that point consist almost wholly of *Mimoseæ*, in prodigious variety. These had all gone to fruit and made rather ill looking specimens. At this point the succulent plants, such as *Begonia*, *Oxalis* and Bromeliaceæ began to appear much less prominent. I had early abandoned the collection of such plants, foreseeing that they would crowd out all other work, owing to the unlimited time necessary to dry them.

Upon new and larger rafts we floated in eight days to Reyes, the mountains becoming smaller, and the banks lower and lower as we proceeded, until, just at the port of Reyes we cut through the outermost range of the Andean foothills. Here, at an altitude of 1,500 feet, the forests are broken by patches of pampa, which are projected into them from the South, and the varying conditions of lake and river, forest, plain and bog, produce a flora of surpassing interest. Nearly two months were passed in Reyes, and although sickness materially interfered, a handsome representation of between 400 and 500 species was secured. The whole of this collection, with the most of what we had brought from Guanai, 9,000 specimens in all, was found one morning sunken with our boat under fifteen feet of water. From this point on down the Beni, the country rapidly assumes the character of the Brazilian forest, with a dense tangle in the sombre shade below and a wealth of floral life high above upon the tree tops. The month of July was passed in journeying down this river and making occasional short stops to collect. At the junction of this river with the Madre de Dios, the centre of the rubber production of that district, two months were spent, and the finest part of my collection was prepared. Just below this junction begins the series of falls produced by the river's cutting its way through a series of low hills. During the two months that were required to make the tedious transit of these falls, I had ample time to complete my collection with a handsome addition. Many of the Andean species with which we had already become familiar, here re-appeared.

The entire collection includes somewhere about three thousand numbers, of which an average of ten specimes were collected.

THALLOPHYTA.

(I.)—DIATOMS.

The following species were found by Prof. C. H. Kain in a gathering from Sorata, Bolivia:—*Amphipleura Lindheimerii*, Grun.; *A pellucida*, Kütz.; *Amphora ovalis*, Kütz.; *Cocconema lanceolata*, Ehr.; *Cocconeis Pediculus*, Ehr.; *Cymbella stomatophora*, Grun.; *Epithemia gibba*, Kütz.; and var. *ventricosa*, Grun.; *E. Argus*, Kütz.; *Encyonema ventricosa*, Kütz.; *Gonphonema constricta*, Ehr.; *Melosira varians*, Ag.; *Navicula elliptica*, Kütz.; *N. tenella*, Breb.; *Pleurosigma Spencerii*, W. Sm; *Surirella cardinalis*, Kitton, rare; *Synedra capitata*, Ehr.; *S. Ulna*, Ehr.; and var. *amphirhynchus*, Ehr.; *S. Crotonensis*, Grun.; var. *constricta*, Kain, n. var,, a provisional name for what may be a new species.

It is sometimes the case in this gathering that *Amphipleura pellucida* and *A. Lindheimerii* are both slightly sigmoid, so that they in some degree appear like *Pleurosigmæ*.

(II.)—ALGÆ.

Determined by Prof. W. G. Farlow.

Coralina Chilensis, Dec., Tacna, Chili, and Pisco, (281, 282).

Prionitis pectinata, J. Ag., Tacna (283).
Gymnogongrus furcellatus, J. Ag., Tacna (284).
Ulva nematoidea, Bory., Tacna (286).

(III.)—FUNGI.

Determined by Prof. Farlow.

Lentinus villosus, Kl., near Yungas, Bolivia (248).
Exidia Auricula-Judæ, Fr., Mapiri, Bolivia (252).
Polyporus sanguineus, Fr., Yungas (254).
P. biformis, Kl., Yungas (255).
Xylaria multiplex, Kunze (?), Yungas (257b).

(IV.)—LICHENS.

Determined by Dr. J. W. Eckfeldt.*

Ramalina calcaris, Fr., var. *fraxinea*, Fr.
Usnea barbata, (L.,) Fr., var. *florida*, Fr., near Yungas (277).
Evernia sulcata, (Sw.), Nyl., Sorata, (269), and Unduavi, (272).
Alectoria Canariensis, Nyl., Unduavi, Bolivia (268).
Theloschistes chrysopthalmus, (L.), Norm., Sorata (270), var. *flavicans*, (Fr.), Wallr., Sorata (267).
Parmelia Camtschadalis, (Ach.), Esch., La Paz, Bolivia (273).
P. caperata, Ach., Yungas (262).
P. perforata, (Jacq.), Ach., var. *hypotropa*, Nyl., La Paz (274).
Physcia hypoleuca, (Muhl.), Tuckerm., Sorata (266).
Sticta damæcornis, Tuck., Yungas and Mapiri (258).
S. crocata (L.), Ach., Yungas (278).
Leptogium foveolatum, Nyl., Syn. i., 124, Yungas (263).
Stereocaulon furcatum, Nyl., Yungas (260).
S. tomentosum (Fr.), Th. Fr., Yungas and Sorata (271).
Cladonia cariosa (Ach.), Spreng., Yungas (259).
C. floerkiana, Fr., Yungas (275).
C. ceratophylla, (Sw.), Eschw., Yungas (276).
Cœnogonium Linkii, Ehrenb., Yungas (280).
Bæomyces fungoides, Ach., Unduavi (251).
Cora Pavonia, Nyl., Yungas (249).

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*Dr. Eckfeldt regrets that more attention was not given to the collection of Lichens in a region so interesting. It may be stated that the collection of the lower cryptogams was purely incidental, my excessive labors entirely preventing any special work in that direction. H. H. R.